



VOL. XXIV.

AUGUSTA, MAINE, THURSDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 21, 1856.

NO. 9.



"Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man."

VALUE OF KEEF AS A MANURE.

Those farmers, who live upon the seaboard have a rare opportunity to draw, at certain times, from the Ocean, a great deal of valuable matter to fertilize their soil. Among the articles thus furnished, is kelp, which has been used by many, where it could be obtained with great advantage. We wish some experiments conducted, whether this material could be ascertained, whether this material could be put into a more compact and portable form, than that in which it is collected. The quick decomposition which it undergoes, when collected green and heaped up, makes it somewhat difficult to transport it any great distance into the interior, and retain all its properties for dressing. In our younger days, we used to be conversant with the application of it to shore farms, but for many years past we have not been within reach of it.

A perusal of the Transactions of the Essex County Agricultural Society, for which we are indebted to John W. Proctor, Esq., of Danvers, has brought to our mind many incidents of former times, when we were better acquainted with kelp and seaweed, and other seaweeds,—to say nothing of muscles and clams, quahogs, lobsters, and horsefoot crabs.

In the committee's report on farms, which we find in the above named work, we find an interesting account of the farm of Mr. Ephraim Brown, on Marblehead neck. The Committee observe that, although Mr. B. does not neglect his barnyard and barnyard, he is also well awake to the value of seaweeds, and all the wealth of his land may be referred to "precious kelp." The committee observe also, that no farmer acquainted with the subject of manures, can witness the rapid decay, and consequent odor of this article, without conviction that the published results of some of the Marblehead farms are possible.

Mr. B. has some thirty-five acres of land under the hoe and plough. Generally kept from ten to twelve men, (principally Irish), devoted to the summer. His farm is principally devoted to milk, he keeping about sixteen cows. He makes no butter and cheese, but sells all his milk.

Among the crops enumerated, the committee speak of eight acres devoted to onions. His principal manure for this crop, is decomposed kelp, ploughed in, with a small supply of decomposed manure. His usual supply of the kelp is 10 to 12 cords to the acre, and in 1854 he applied 12 cords per acre. Different sections of the 8 acres yielded different amounts. About half an acre of the field, used to be covered with stagnant water, but had been under-drained, and had upon it a crop equal to 1000 bushels per acre. The estimated crop of the whole 8 acres was 5000 bu. of marketable onions.

Another crop on Mr. B's farm at the time the committee examined it, was 5 acres of squashes. One measured acre produced two wagon loads of one ton each. It may not be amiss here to mention Mr. B's method of warding off the striped bug from his squashes, by the use of lime. We can only say that he is more successful with lime for this purpose than we ever have been. His mode of using it is this: A cask or more is slacked in the usual way, only as dry as possible, and while hot, is sown broadcast, in a favorable wind, over the vines. The bugs fly before it, and escape into the sea, or somewhere else; at any rate, they never trouble them again, when this is thoroughly used.

For the Maine Farmer.

IMPROVED KING PHILIP, OR BROWN CORN.

MR. EDITOR:—As your columns are the source of information on agriculture and all matters and interests appertaining thereto; I wish to make some enquiry about the Improved King Philip or Brown Corn, so called.

By the Agricultural report of the Patent Office for 1854, I learn that a small quantity of the above named corn was distributed by the Patent Office of the U. S. in 1852 or '53. Mr. Gilbert L. Bailey, of Portland, Me., states that he received a small quantity of said corn. Not being engaged in agricultural pursuits himself he handed it to a friend Mr. R. Leighton, of Westbrook, who planted it early in June, and harvested the product the 10th of September, yielding in good fall ears at the rate of 120 bushels of shelled corn to the acre. He also adds, that a gentleman living some twenty miles in the interior, took about forty kernels of the corn and planted after he commenced hoeing seven days, and in two months and twenty-seven days, he gathered 5 pecks of full fine ears from the product.

I also noticed statements of gentlemen from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, &c., who were equally successful in their experiments with this new variety. Being anxious to obtain some for planting, I wish to know if there is any of this corn to be had. If so, will you or some other through your columns, tell us where it can be found, even in small quantities?

JOHN ELLIOT.

Abbot, January 31, 1856.

NOTE. It can be had of George P. Hooper, South Paris, Maine.

For the Maine Farmer.

SPENT TAN—QUERIES.

MR. EDITOR:—Will you allow any of your readers to inform me through the medium of your columns—whether they have used spent tan, as a fertilizer, and if so, upon what kind of soil, with what result, and if used separately, or in connection with ashes or lime, how composed, and how applied? JOHN SMITH.

Gorham, Feb., 1856.

Reported for the Farmer.

FARMERS' MEETING AT THE STATE HOUSE.

THURSDAY EVENING, JAN. 24, 1856.

Mr. Butman in the chair. He stated that the subject of discussion for this evening was to have been the composting of manure, but as some persons were absent who were expected to take part in discussing that subject, he would submit to the direction of the meeting in regard to the propriety of taking it up now.

Mr. Gilman remarked that it would be well to postpone remarks upon composts for this evening. He had heard various reports in regard to the soil and climate of the Aroostook region, and its adaptation to agricultural pursuits. He would like to hear Mr. J. W. Haines, who had resided there several years, speak in regard to the country. He asked him what time the farmers in his neighborhood commenced farming operations?

Mr. Haines said that they generally commenced sowing about the 10th of May. Snow falls so early that the earth does not freeze, and as soon as it is off the ground is ready to be ploughed. One year since he has been there, on the last day of April he dug down through the snow to some turnips that had been left in the ground in the fall, found them green, and on the first Monday of May following he sowed that same piece to wheat, and had 33 bushels of wheat to the acre.

The first snow this year fell on Thanksgiving day, and this has laid on until now. Much has been said about our winters in Aroostook being long, and of the difficulty of raising cattle among us on that account,—has raised cattle in Kennebec, and in Aroostook; finds that he can raise cattle as well there as in Kennebec, because the pastures commence as soon as the snow is off. We sometimes have slight frosts in August, especially on some low lands, never has suffered more by frost than he has while living in Hallowell, does not raise much Indian corn. The principal crops are, wheat, oats, barley, rye, potatoes and other roots, and buckwheat,—never have any frosts in spring to hurt crops. Potatoes are abundant, gets from 3 to 400 bushels to the acre; his farm is a yellow loam, the stones are of a slaty formation, mixed with limestone. There is much slate ledge, and stratified lime stone, lime is burnt on his plantation equal to that of Thomaston. It is a great country for hay. Just over the boundary line at Tobique is a mountain of gypsum, which is free to all who supply themselves,—last winter 2 or 3000 loads were carried away, some of it to the distance of 40 miles, it is very soft and easily ground. Thinks a ton of hay can be raised cheaper in Aroostook than in any part of the State. Land is cheaper. On 17 acres which cost him \$15, per acre, to clear, and first year sowed to wheat and oats, the wheat paid him \$28, next year netted \$10 per acre, next year with a crop of clover seed, netted \$15 per acre, and on casting up the net income on other crops, it amounted to \$72 per acre in seven years.

This land would bring \$15 per acre, although wild land is only 50 cts. per acre, so that one acre of this is worth 30 cts. of wild land,—has tried winter wheat but it does not yield with him so much as spring wheat. By sowing winter wheat on 1st week in October, it is better than if sowed earlier; raises turnips (Kata Bags) easily, and often raises 800 bushels to the acre with but very little labor.

By sowing them broadcast they grow well and are easier gathered. Considers the wheat crop best after ruta bags, never saw any difference in grass crops when laid down after ruta bags, finds that some think that people are starving in Aroostook. But he knows many families who a few years ago went there poor, who now have farms of 100 acres cleared, and 20 or more head of cattle.

He has cleared up 200 acres of land, built two mills, three houses and two barns; one of his sons carries on the business with him. They this year will sell \$2000 worth of farm produce, sold \$500 of cattle this year, sold a pair of 3 years old that girted 6 feet 8 inches. Has been no famine in Aroostook as some have reported, but there was some scarcity in Madawaska among the French population. This was owing to their lumbering late in the spring, they did not get out to take care of their farms in season—has been no want of food in Aroostook. Is 30 miles from Madawaska. Not many apples in Aroostook, as yet; apples have been fruited there in 7 years from seed, but not much attention is paid to fruit there. Some plums raised there called Canada plum,—has raised as good corn and beans there as ever he did in Kennebec, but does not plant much corn, because he can do better with other crops.

Our soil is better after being plowed, and it raises heavier wheat on such land than on burn. Two years ago, got 414 bushels of wheat on an acre. Raises large amount of rough buckwheat, and considers it a valuable crop. Not to be ground so as to grind up the hull—merely crack it, and have a bolt or sieve to shake off the hull away from the flour.

Have from six to ten months schooling in our district per year—have four schools in our plantation. Have missionaries among us of different denominations. People have been liberal in regard to schools, as they have no other tax, and therefore pay well for schooling. Have a mail twice, and in some sections three times per week.

Prevailing growth of forest is maple, birch, beech, fir and cedar. Stony ridges are generally covered with beech. Very little hemlock. In the settling lands not much pine.

When you cut off the hard wood, and do not clear up the land, fir and red maple come up. We find a market at our doors for all we can raise, but our lumber, &c., must go to St. John. If we had a railroad, it would come to Bangor. We frequently see hackmatacks (larch) very large—have seen them three feet in diameter.

White oaks springs up naturally, and makes good pasturage, and our cows give more milk there than they used to in Kennebec.

He believes crops can be raised as cheap and abundant, such as wheat, hay, oats, roots, &c.,

as anywhere in the State. Oftentimes raises two bushels of grain easier than he used to in Kennebec. Can raise a ton of beef, pork, or wool, and get them to Bangor cheaper than he can do it anywhere else in Maine. Keeps the sheep on straw, and lets them help themselves from the straw stack. Has a mixed breed of Merino, South Down and Leicester. Wool of medium fineness, and carcasses large. Yields five pounds of wool per head.

Many build their barns on cedar piles or posts, with a basement high enough for cattle to run under. The basement is not secured by any banking, as the snow coming early acts as a banking in most cases. Has never known the manure to freeze very hard.

It is a very healthy climate. Has not paid over ten dollars for doctors' bills in his family in ten years. Has seen no cases of consumption since he first went there.

Mr. Darling of Patten, being enquired of, said he has a favorable opinion of the country for farming purposes. Has lived in Patten 15 years, is 96 miles from Bangor. That region is not now settling very rapidly. Thinks the soil is superior to the soil in Kennebec. They get, on an average, from 25 to 30 bushels of wheat, and not unfrequently see crops of 40 to 45 bu. to the acre. Do not raise large crops of corn.

Patten and vicinity is on a rolling or high swell of land, covered with heavy, hard wood growth—large rock maples. Soil is a yellow loam. The weevil has troubled their farms some. The potato rot has not troubled them much there for two years past. Thinks rock maple growth indicates best soil. It requires industry and economy to get along well there as in other places. Can get land in his town for \$1.80 to \$2.00 per acre. Knows very many who came there poor, who are now worth handsome property, obtained by farming and nothing else. They have not had a pauper in town for the last four years.

OFFICERS OF AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

The following are the lists of officers elected by the various county societies, so far as we are able to learn, with the exception of one or two already published, and those of the Androscoggin Society, given in another column. The secretary of any society not included in the following list, will please forward the names of the officers of his society for publication:

KENNEBEC. Oakes Howard, President; John May, B. Dudley, F. F. Hains, Vice Presidents; D. Cargill, Rec. Sec'y; E. Holmes, Cor. Sec'y; R. Eaton, Treasurer; H. M. Eaton, S. N. Watson, T. B. Reed, Trustees. Daniel Craig, Ag't and Coll. Horace Parlin, Member of the Executive Committee.

SOUTH KENNEBEC. Daniel Lancaster, President; John Neal, Wm. S. Grant, Samuel Dinslow, Vice Presidents; Franklin Glazier, Jr., Hallowell, Cor. Sec'y; James M. Carpenter, Pittston, Rec. Sec'y; John Stone, Gardiner, Treas. and Coll.; Dan'l Lancaster, Geo. Jewett, Alden Ricks, Trustees. Nathan Foster, Member of Agriculture.

SAGadahoc. Francis T. Purrington of Topsham, President; Nelson Ham, West Bath, Rufus Sylvester, Bowdoin, John H. Thompson, Topsham, Vice Presidents; Samuel F. Dike, Cor. Sec'y; James H. Whitman, Rec. Sec'y; Elisha Clark, Treasurer; Sam'l F. Dike of Bath, Geo. A. Rogers of Topsham, Robert Given of Brunswick, Benj. M. Brown of West Bath, and Josiah Merrow of Bowdoinham, Trustees.

Charles J. Gilman, Brunswick, Member of Executive Committee.

Cash on hand, \$322.98.

York. Nathan Dane, President; Thos. Dyer, 3d, John Elden, Jr., Joseph Frost, Wm. Lord, Vice Presidents; S. L. Goodale, Cor. Sec'y; John Hanson, Rec. Sec'y; Wm. Noyes, Treas. and Agent; A. A. Hanson, Librarian; S. L. Goodale, John Elden, Jr., Usher A. Hall, Sam'l Gilpatrick, Elijah Hayes, Trustees. S. L. Goodale, member of Ex. Com. of State Society.

PISCATAQUIS. Joseph Kelsey, President; E. B. Averill, Sec'y; Leonard Howard, Jr., Rowe, Russell Kittredge, Vice Presidents; Hiram Doud, Treas. and Coll.; Wm. G. Clark, Benj. F. Wilbur, Seth Lee, Trustees; Wm. G. Clark, Member of the Executive Committee.

PENOBSCOT. Isaac Case, Kenduskeag, President; Martin Mower, Bangor, Wm. Grinnell, Exeter, Vice Presidents; Isaac W. Case, Kenduskeag, Cor. and Rec. Sec'y; E. F. Crane, Kenduskeag, Treas. and Coll.; Lowell Marston, Glenburn, Jos. Bartlett, Bangor, E. H. Gibbs, Glenburn, Trustees.

Com. on Stock—Henry Butman, Dixmont; S. D. Jennings, Garland; E. W. Hasey, Bangor. Com. on Crops—Isaac Case, Kenduskeag; Martin Mower, Bangor; Wm. Grinnell, Exeter. Com. on Manufactures—John S. Sayward, P. B. Mills, T. W. Egery, Bangor.

Com. on Horses—E. W. Hasey, I. B. Norcross, Bangor; E. H. Gibbs, Glenburn. John S. Sayward, Agent.

E. F. Crane, Kenduskeag, Member of Executive Committee.

WALDO. A. W. Burrill, Waldo, President; Nathan Pierce, Montville, W. G. Sibley, Fredrick, Vice Presidents; Robert White, Belfast, Sec'y; W. T. Coburn, Belfast, Treas. Twenty-eight Trustees were also chosen.

Funds remaining in the treasury, \$250.

WASHINGTON. Nathan Pattangall, President; Joshua A. Lowell, Geo. Downs, Horace Clapp, Vice Presidents; Wm. D. Dana, Sec'y; John Kilby, Treas.; Thompson Lincoln, Coll.; Wm. D. Dana, Agent and Librarian.

Com. on Manufactures—Theodore Lincoln, Horace Clapp, John Reynolds. Com. on Stock—T. J. D. Fuller, C. H. Hayden, Ishabod Stoddard.

Com. on Crops, &c.—Eph. C. Gates, N. P. Pattangall, Ezra Stanchfield.

Nathan Pattangall, Edmund Lincoln, Seth Gerry, Trustees.

The number of members who have paid up their assessments, is about one hundred and fifty. The Cattle Show and Fair is held at Pembroke, on the last Tuesday of September annually. The annual meeting for the choice of officers is held on the second Friday in December.

A business meeting of trustees and committees, is held on the second Saturday in February.

BIRDS EARN THEIR OWN LIVING.

The difference between two men—A plan for Toads—Ingratitude.

A gentleman in this vicinity, in the spring of 1853, purchased some 20 Kentish or Early Richmond cherry trees, perhaps better known as the "common red" cherry. On the next morning he made another purchase of about 18 more, also. In conversing with him, I enquired why he selected so many trees of one variety. He made the following noble reply: "I am desirous of tolling the robins to my place, and I design to give them a generous share of the fruit of these trees, for they earn it in destroying great numbers of worms and other enemies to vegetation. I also admire the sweet melody of their songs."

I remarked that I highly approved of his course, and that I ardently hoped he would be profited by it, and enjoy their music. By the way, I think this variety of cherry is the most hardy, productive, and reliable of any other, for Maine, and if the fruit is permitted to remain on the trees, say ten days, after most persons pronounce them ripe; they would improve in flavor, become far less acid, and be a decent fruit for the table.

Another and more wealthy individual, had a goodly number of bearing cherry trees of the same variety in his garden; but when the fruit was ripe, he manifested no generosity to the birds, but a grudging disposition. He was so annoyed when a robin ate a cherry, that he procured a fowling piece and shot every bird that alighted on one of his trees. He was, however, (justly I think,) severely censured for his peevishness and ingratitude.

Now, can this man possess human feelings? Can he possess the common principle of justice? or in fact, can he be considered as strictly honest? For he deprives the birds of their just due, after they have labored for him for the whole season. I do not see how he can escape from such conclusions. For he was indebted to them as instruments of the most high for the preservation of his crops. They only required enough to satisfy hunger, but he denies the poor birds even a living. Therefore, the taking of their lives is nothing short of the most cruel injustice. Also, by taking the lives of these birds, he did a serious injury, not only to the interests of himself, but also his immediate neighbors; for they are useful in every garden, and therefore, are public benefactors.

Now, a word for Toads. Toads destroy great numbers of insects which are injurious to garden crops. Knowing this fact, some individuals provide for them some dark retreats or cells, which they can crawl into and out of at pleasure. They frequently are much abused, by comparison with any ugly creature.

True, they cannot be considered very handsome; yet, they are perfectly harmless, and are very useful in gardens, by the destruction of multitudes of noxious insects, and deserve better treatment than they frequently receive, even from those whom they benefit.

Respectfully yours,
BANGOR, Feb. 7, 1856.

A CONVENIENT HALT.

"Fast bind, sure find," is an ancient aphorism too true to be called in question in these days of improvement.

Those who use young horses are well aware of the necessity of a secure fastening; and in point of economy and security, I have not seen or heard of any equal to the one which I use. That others may avail themselves of the same convenience, I will give directions for making one: Have a head-stall, or the head part of what is commonly called a "noose-halter," made from 1 to 1 1/2 inches in width, with a good iron ring to fasten in, have a hitch-strap, of equal size, from 5 ft. to 6 ft. in length, with a good slide or ring, that will easily slide to any required place upon it; have a good strap at each end, and it is complete.

The advantages combined in this over any other kind that I have seen, in part are,—the hitching strap can be used with the bridle, or halter; readily adapting itself to the various sizes of posts, rails, limbs, staples, rings, hooks, or most any other thing that we may have occasion to fasten to, without danger of being untied by the nestling of the horse, or drawn so tight that it is hard to untie.

The length can be varied, to suit the occasion, by the number of turns used in hitching, or even by putting it through a ring or staple, and then snapping the other end into the ring of the head-stall, thus giving but little scope for nestling.

Phillips, Me.

MAKING MAPLE SUGAR IN VERMONT.

MR. EDITOR:—The Vermont people do quite a business at making maple sugar, in the month of March and April, which is very lucrative. They have long since abandoned the use of troughs and kettles, and substituted buckets and pans. They tap their trees with an auger, drive a nail into the tree and fasten the bucket to it. By this course they save all the sap, the hiving having no chance to blow it away. They make use of what they call pans, to boil the sap in. These pans are made of sheet iron 5 feet square, and 10 inches deep, placed over an arch. One man can make from 75 to 100 lbs. per day. Some farmers in this State, make from 1000 to 1800 lbs., run it into casks, and send it to New York, and other places to market.

Would not some of the people in Maine do well to follow making sap sugar more, and adopt the Vermont principle? D. BLAKE.

Stratford, Vt., 1855.

FRUIT PILFERERS.

MR. EDITOR:—I hope sir that you will pass up the subject this winter of having a law passed to protect those in this State, who raise summer, fall or winter fruit, from those who love to take what is not their own. H. D.

NOTE. We believe there is some such law now, which make such nuisances liable to imprisonment. The only trouble is to catch the rascals, as their eyes are generally open when honest men's are shut. [Ed.]

For the Maine Farmer.

ANDROSCOGGIN AG. & HORT. SOCIETY.

Pursuant to notice, the annual meeting of the Androscoggin Ag. and Hort. Society was held, this day, in Jones Hall, and was called to order by the President.

Listened to report of Trustees, which is as follows:—

In hands of Treasurer, March 1, 1855, \$514 13

Interest to Jan 9, 1856, 25 70

Have received on assessments and of new members, \$298 00

Have received by avails of Fair, 108 68

" " by sales of cotton cloth, 7 00

Dues from State, 300 00

Total, \$1253 51

We have drawn orders and paid out, \$628 69

Leaving in Treasurer's hands, \$624 82

Premiums and expenses as follows:—

Orders for premiums awarded, \$308 64

Expenses, 320 65

Received of members as follows:

Amount rec'd.	Premiums paid.
In Lewiston, \$105 00	\$75 75
Auburn, 62 00	36 25
Greene, 43 00	75 54
Turner, 23 00	46 75
Danville, 17 00	5 25
Webster, 14 00	22 85
Durham, 14 00	6 50
Lisbon, 10 00	3 50
Poland, 6 00	5 50
Wales, 3 00	1 00
Minot, 2 00	1 00

Your Trustees are decidedly of the opinion that different management is necessary, and more liberal contributions must be had, in order to conduct the enterprise so as to give general good, and general satisfaction.

Jno. M. FAYE, per order.

Report accepted.

Proceeded to elect a board of officers by choosing a nominating committee of one from each town represented; who nominated the following board of officers:—

For President, Robert Martin, Danville; Vice Presidents, Samuel Moody, Esq., Lisbon; Jonathan Merrill, Durham; Rec. Sec., Wm. R. Wright, Lewiston; Cor. Sec., Wm. P. Frye, Lewiston; Treasurer, Mark Lowell, Lewiston; Collector, Ham Brooks, Lewiston; Agent, L. G. Field, Lewiston; Librarian, C. Record, Danville. Trustees, Aug. Sprague, Greene; Daniel Pishes, Poland; Rufus Pinney, Turner; Jas. S. Nash, Auburn; Sewall Moody, Webster. All of whom were subsequently elected.

Committee on the location of a site for further shows and fairs, reported in part, and to them was re-committed the location, and they were instructed (if by them deemed advisable,) to request the Trustees to call a meeting of the Society—as soon as practicable, and lay their report before the Society for their action thereon.

Elected Robert Martin member of the Executive Board of the Maine State Agricultural Society.

Voted to assess one dollar on a member for the ensuing year. Adjourned, sine die.

Wm. R. WRIGHT, Rec. Sec.

Lewiston, Jan. 9, 1856.

For the Maine Farmer.

CAUSE OF THE JELLY LIKE APPEARANCE ON SOME BEEF.

MR. EDITOR:—In reply to your correspondent L. B. Sawyer, I would say that I have killed a great number of cattle which exhibited the same appearance he speaks of, but never thought it singular. I consider it is caused by the worms which we can find in the backs of cattle from March to May, and frequently until June. The white mottled spots he speaks of, were the worms forming. If he had scraped off the jelly he would have noticed at once that it was not the flesh that was affected, but that the jelly was between the flesh and skin, and which he will find upon all cattle which he may kill between January and March. If I am incorrect I wish to be corrected by some of your able contributors. ISAAC H. HARRIMAN.

Oxford, February 4, 1856.

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS. Frequent written reviews are among the most successful means that teachers can employ for securing thoroughness and accuracy of scholarship. Several topics are written distinctly on the blackboard, and the pupils are required to expand them as fully and accurately as possible. Each pupil is seated by himself, and furnished with pens and paper; but receives no assistance, direct or indirect, from either teacher or text-book. This mode of examining a class accomplishes at least three important objects at the same time. It affords a thorough test of the pupil's knowledge of the subject; it is one of the best methods of cultivating freedom and accuracy in the use of language; and it furnishes a valuable discipline to the pupil's mind by throwing him entirely on his own resources. The task of examining so many separate written exercises, and of estimating their value, increases the labor of the teacher, but the gain to the pupil is more than an equivalent for the extra service required. [Mass. Teacher.]

THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN WOOL. The statement has been propagated far and wide that American wool is unfit to give that beautiful finish required for broadcloth of the best quality. It has been stated that our wools were longer in the staple than the foreign kinds, and were excellent for making strong wares, but did not possess the necessary felting property requisite for fine cloth, and for this reason a little foreign wool was necessary. H. C. Merriam, in the last number of the Country Gentleman, scatters all such assertions to the wind, and proves conclusively that American wool surpasses all foreign wools for its felting properties, and for making beautiful broadcloth—light or heavy. He states that American grown wool and fine wool from Saxony have been tested, and the palm awarded to the former. The finest Saxony wool obtained from Hungary contained only 2400 serrations to the inch, while wool obtained from samples of American flocks contained 2552 serrations to the inch. [Exchange.]

For the Maine Farmer.

WINTER.

How bleak when the day is spent,
And the night comes forth with stars,
To watch the household fire's red flames
That flicker about the bars;
To watch their glimmer upon the wall,
Their glow on the window panes;
Like the hues that paint the West,
When the rubied sunset wanes.

To feel a comfort in the heart,
And the spirit cheerful grow;
While trees in leafless sadness cower
In the night breeze to and fro;
As snow flakes fall upon the boughs,
And the wind blows keen and cold,
And eyes grow bright as winter tales
Of our earliest days are told.

Then is the hour for hearts to warm,
And the soul with love to teem;
As wine derives its ripened taste
From the sun's declining beam.
The cleanly hearthstone, as it gleams
In the large fire's dancing light,
Is oft the throne of hallowed power
In the chilling winter's night.

Then blessed be the homes of the poor,
Where the heart's affections band;
Where blessed delights, though short and few,
Brief hours of happiness lend.
Blessed be the lips that nightly speak,
In language of love and mirth;
Making their homes a summer land,
While winter covers the earth.

THE SNOW.

The snow was proverbially called the "poor farmer's manure," before scientific analysis had shown that it contained a larger per centage of ammonia than rain. The snow serves as a protecting mantle to the tender herbage and the roots of all plants against the fierce blasts and cold of winter. An examination of snow in Siberia showed that when the temperature of the air was seventy-two degrees below zero, the temperature of the snow a little below the surface was twenty-nine degrees above zero, over one hundred degrees difference. The snow keeps the earth just below its surface in a condition to take on changes which would not happen were the earth bare and frozen to a great depth. The snow prevents exhalations from the earth, and is a powerful absorbent, retaining and returning to the earth gases arising from vegetable and animal decomposition. The snow, though it falls heavily at the door of the poor and brings death and starvation to the fowls of the air and beasts of the field, is yet of incalculable benefit in a climate like ours, and especially at this time, when the deep springs of the earth were failing and the mill streams were refusing their motive powers to the craving appetites of man. If, during the last month, the clouds had dropped rain instead of snow, we might have pumped and bored the earth in vain for water; but, with a foot of snow upon the earth and many feet upon the mountains, the hum of the mill stones and the harsh notes of the saw will soon and long testify to its beneficence. Bridges, earth-works, and the fruits of engineering skill and toil may be swept away, but man will still rejoice in the general good and adore the benevolence of Him who orders all things aright. The snow is a great purifier of the atmosphere. The absorbent power or capillary action of snow is like that of a sponge or charcoal. Immediately after snow has fallen melt it in a clean vessel and taste it, and you will find immediately evidences of its purity. Try some a day or two old and it becomes nauseous, especially in cities. Snow water makes the mouth harsh and dry. It has the same effect on the skin, and upon the hands and feet that produces the painful malady of chilblains. In Alpine countries snow water has been thought to be productive of the disease called goitre. The following easy experiment illustrates beautifully the absorbent property of snow: Take a lump of snow (a piece of snow crust answers well) of three or four inches in length and hold it in the flame of a lamp; not a drop of water will fall from the snow, but the water, as fast as formed, will penetrate or be drawn up into the mass of snow by capillary attraction. It is by virtue of this attraction that the snow purifies the atmosphere by absorbing and retaining its noxious and noisome gases and odors. [Chas. G. Page, in Nat. Intelligencer.]

POTATO EXPERIMENT. A farmer of Newton, Ct., in the Country Gentleman, gives the following result of an experiment in potato planting, made last season by him: it will have some considerable bearing upon the cut and uncut methods. "I cut the potato so that each piece would contain two chits or eyes—put one piece in a hill. The ground which was rather poor, was manured with two wheelbarrow loads of well-rotted barnyard, mixed with one of leached ashes. This manured thirteen hills. The pieces were dropped, and a handful of plaster to a hill, and then covered. Planted June 13. One potato, weight half a pound, planted six hills which produced 80 tubers, weighing 18 lbs. Potato known here as 'Log Cabin'—not affected with rot."

SNOW BREAD. We find the annexed paragraph in one of our exchanges. It is curious if true:

"All persons where snow abounds, are not, perhaps, aware of the value of the fleecy flakes in making light, delicious, and wholesome bread. There is no 'raising' in the world so perfectly physiological as good, fresh, sweet snow; it raises bread or cakes as beautifully as the best yeast, or the purest acids and alkalis, while it leaves no taint or fermentation like the former, nor injurious neutral salt like the latter. Indeed, it raises by supplying atmosphere wherewith to puff up the dough, while the other methods only supply carbonic acid gas."

EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY. The superintendent of public schools in New Jersey reports that the number of children in the State between the ages of five and eighteen years, is 173,014, of which 144,923 have attended school the past year, being an increase of 9,853 over 1854. The amount of money raised and appropriated to school purposes, including the State appropriation of \$80,000, was \$475,168 64, being an increase over 1854 of \$86,596 78. The school commissioners recommend the establishment of free schools.

